OGL Status to Newsprint.

4311. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the introduction of Open General Licence status to newsprint, exemption of excise duty and removal of 2&1 ratio of indigenous to imported newsprint, consumption have led the newsprint industry to a serious crisis;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to review the existing newsprint policy and reintroduce the excise duty and newsprint, consumption ratio as was the earlier practice to save the indigenous industry;

(d) if so, the time by which this review is likely to be implemented; and

(e) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (e) The Policy for import of newsprint has been recently reviewed and in terms of Ministry of Commerce Notification No.24/12-97 dated 05.03.1997, import of newsprint is now permitted without an import licence by actual users who hold 'Registration Certificate' issued by the Registrar Newspapers of Indian (RNI) on submission of necessary documentary evidence, duly authenticated by the RNI, to the satisfaction of the Customs authorities at the time of clearance of goods. This restriction on import has been placed keeping in view the problems of domestic newsprint manufacturing industry. Excise duty on newsprint has been exempted for many years and no adverse effect is perceived on account of this exemption. There is no proposal to reintroduce the newsprint consumption ratio for import of newsprint.

Competition with China in Exports

4312. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether India has been facing stiff competition from China in the export of both traditional items and that China has virtually captured the export markets in the non-communist countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which India's exports have dwindled as a result thereof;

(c) the major factors responsible therefor; and

(d) the steps contemplated by the Government to evolve a strategy to face the competition and to regain the lost export market ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) There is a divergence of the traditional and non-traditional items of export by India and China. Therefore, India's markets in non-communist countries have not been lost to China

(b) and (d) Does not arise.

Export of Coconut and its Products

4313. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total quantity of coconut and its products exported and the foreign exchange therefrom during each of the last three years; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to boost the export of these items ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) The total quantity and value of coconut and coir products exported during the last three years are as under :-

Quantity : in MTs.
Value: in Rs. Lakhs

Year	Coconut (Fresh, dessicated and dried)		Coir Products	
	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
1993-94	29	4.83	37951	12936.75
1994-95	160	13.26	48086	17165.25
1995-96	174	44.49	48276	20684.65

(b) Exports are mainly in the coir products segment which has shown a positive trend during the last three years. Some of the steps taking during the Eighth Five Year Plan for enhancing production & productivity of coconut and exports of coir products inter-alia include :

(i) Production and distribution of quality plant material;

(ii) Promotion of Integrated farming in coconut holdings;

(iii) Area expansion;

(iv) Implementation of Integrated control of leaf eating caterpillar;

(v) Undertaking of joint publicity programmes with